

0'Dowd secures funding to unlock water connections for 2,300 properties

Funding secured by Infrastructure Minister John O'Dowd means 2,300 new properties can now have water and sewerage connections.

DfI Driver, Vehicle, Operator, and Enforcement Statistics Quarter Two: July to September 2024

The 'DfI Driver, Vehicle, Operator, and Enforcement Statistics 2024/25 Quarter Two' report, detailing statistics for July to September 2024 is now available.

New figures on stalking case processing times released

New figures demonstrate the ongoing success of enhanced stalking protections, the Justice Minister has said.

Reappointment and extension to the terms of appointment to the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools and its Diocesan Education Committees

Education Minister Paul Givan has announced the reappointment of one member to the Council for Catholic Maintained Schools (CCMS) and three members to

its Derry Diocesan Education Committee (DEC).

New planning framework “panders” to profit driven private housing developers say Greens

Responding to [the “planning overhaul” announced today by government](#), Green Party Co-Leader, Adrian Ramsay, said:

“This new planning framework from Government fails to tackle the housing crisis head on and instead panders yet further to the interests of private developers whose main interest is lining their pockets.

By pitting what’s happening as a binary battle between builders and blockers, the government has insulted local communities and local government, all of whom desperately want affordable homes and fully understand the importance of balancing that with the need for food, nature and local energy.

Instead, the Government should be going head to head with the developers who are fixated on one thing only – maximising their profits by building yet more executive unaffordable homes at the expense of council homes for social rent and more affordable homes to buy. That means being tougher with developers over requiring a higher proportion of genuinely affordable and homes to rent and to buy as part of new developments. Equally developers must be made to honour real commitments to invest in local services that housebuilding does put additional pressure on.

This all can be done and still reverse the disastrous decline in biodiversity and protect local democracy. But this has to be done with communities, including through strengthening the role of neighbourhood plans, not imposed onto them by profit driven developers.

And Ministers should be taking this opportunity to look in the round at the housing crisis, and prioritising funds for increasing supply and ending right to buy, alongside building the right homes in the right place and the right price.

As it stands, this planning framework confirms many of the fears of those who not only want to protect this country’s degraded nature. We are not on course to meet most of the legally-binding nature recovery targets we have signed up to and this Planning Framework makes it even less likely we will hit them. This is more than a missed opportunity, it’s a dereliction of duty. We can and we must tackle both the housing crisis and the nature crisis. This new NPPF currently does neither.

The Government isn't only bringing more and more land into its definition of 'grey belt' which can be built on, it is removing any local democratic say in the process. The deputy prime minister's claim that this will remove "chaos and subjectiveness" from the system doesn't wash. People have the right to have a say over major changes to their local community. This is local democracy in action."

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